

East Ocean View Civic League

Minutes of meeting held November 6, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ann Bolen, Vice President. John Greene, President, was on vacation.

Treasurer's Report was given by Jeffrey Lewis:

Total Assets	\$5597.12
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$5597.12
Net Income	\$-531.75

The Board intends to resolve the license plate account, \$850.39, as the person whose initiative it was passed away and the bank that handled the account has gone out of business.

A detailed financial statement is available on request of John Greene, President.

Police Report

Officer Warren Snyder, our Community Resource Officer, noted there were 42 reported incidents in our area: 35 were property crimes and 7 were violent crimes. There were 3 arrests. As for the more serious incidents, the suspects and victims generally knew each other and were drug-related.

There is a special unit that reviews and checks out all areas of concern ("hot spots") reported by the general police officers. The police have taken down 3 drug houses in our area in the last three weeks. They go after these houses as "common nuisances," as it is the best way to get results in court. They contact and go after the owner and take the house away if there is not an adequate response toward cleaning up the property.

Officer Snyder reported that on Saturday, October 4, 2014, the Police Department and members of the East Ocean View Rec. Ctr., ages 14-17, had a basketball game from 6-9 p.m. The purpose was to build a better social relationship between the police and the youth in the area. The police won narrowly 76 to 73. It was a nice event and they enjoyed mixing with the kids. They hope to do it again next year.

Guest Speaker: Patrick Wilson, Virginian Pilot Reporter

Patrick Wilson is a reporter for the Virginian-Pilot and PilotOnline. He came to the Pilot in 2008 from the Winston-Salem Journal where he covered crime. He is a Michigan native and graduated from Michigan State in 1997 with a degree in journalism. He has been in Norfolk for 7 years and covers politics and government but his assignments are open-ended. Earlier this year he met with John Greene and Ann Bolen to gain information and insight into what is happening in East Ocean View, and what could benefit the growth in this area. Mr. Wilson reported that he spends a great deal of time at City Hall and he likes to be there as he can gain needed information as well as establish leads and contacts. As far as receiving information, Mr. Wilson said that information comes to him from many sources: phone interviews, e-mail,

etc. This includes general information, issues and criticism. He says he tries to be honest whenever addressing issues with concerned people, and whatever the situation.

As for the Virginian-Pilot, it has down-sized but is still doing interesting journalism. Some reporters have retired or moved on as a result of the down-sizing. There is less focus in today's paper on advertising, especially cars and homes where readers can find a better and free service to use. The paper is trying to adapt and stay relevant but it is financially strained. Mr. Wilson states that the future for the paper is PilotOnline, though online journalism is a work in progress. Information is gained from outside sources and added to the story as it comes in, so information is not complete at first but develops as the picture becomes more complete.

Mr. Wilson reported that there is a federal investigation in the works that involves City Hall and Housing. Records have been subpoenaed, but Mr. Wilson says no one knows any more than that thus far. He talked about the development of Waterside and Mayor Paul Fraim flying to Baltimore for a meeting with the potential developer and that City Council had no knowledge of this meeting. The City Attorney also attended this meeting. Mr. Wilson cited this as an interesting area of development and concern.

In answer to a question from the floor about a merger between the Pilot and the Daily Press, Mr. Wilson explained that there have been talks but it is a question of one entity buying out the other. The Virginian-Pilot is owned by the Battens and the Daily Press by the Tribune.

Guest Speaker - Mr. David Speer, Department of Utilities, City of Norfolk

Mr. Speer has reported to us regularly concerning the utility projects in the area, especially the Pump Station at the corner of Pretty Lake and Shore Drive. He reports that the water/sewage units and the pump station work is complete and that they are working on the nearby home owners' issues, specifically, a strong and pungent (sulphur) aroma due to the pump station.

In answer to a question from the floor, Mr. Speer stated there are two water treatment plants in Norfolk that take care of Norfolk's water needs and they also sell water to Virginia Beach and Suffolk.

Their next area of utility work will be 21st - 22nd Streets and Pretty Lake Avenue in between these streets. They will be doing pipe and sewer work and this work will take a year-plus to complete. They work with other City Departments to do additional work at the same time so disruption can be kept to a minimum. As they work they have discovered old clay sewer lines that are crumbling, and thus are doing a controlled replacement to upgrade the water lines at the same time.

Mr. Speer reports that when they begin work on Pleasant Avenue the street will be closed to through traffic. Citizens may use the road to go to and from work, the Post Office and other delivery services will be able to use the road but there will be no through traffic. Many members offered suggestions for handling the traffic.

Mr. Speer introduced Gabriel Phelps who will be taking this project over from him in the near future.

Old Business

The owners of the Lagoon Restaurant, who spoke to us in September to get League approval for live music, missed the deadline for the September City Planning Commission meeting and will present their request at

the November or December session. The meeting is open to all residents of the City of Norfolk but one is urged to check to see if this item is on the docket before going downtown.

The Mayor's Ocean View Task Force meeting was held on Oct. 16th and the meeting was attended by two Board members. Items discussed included:

- Renderings of the new apartment building for the Ramada Inn site. There are 240 units proposed, mostly one and two bedroom (no four room units), with parking on the inside of the site. There will be 5 buildings with 5,500 square feet of retail.
- Tommy Smigiel showed renderings of the new Ocean View Elementary School. He is also in talks with bringing a YMCA to the area.
- Proposed 45 East Beach style homes to be built next to the Bay Oaks Park and 40 town homes to be built near Ocean View Ave. and Chesapeake Ave.
- The City has purchased the Commonwealth Bank and will convert it to a Senior Center.
- The City is in discussion with owners of the Shopping Center near East Beach and with several builders who want to purchase the land across from East Beach to develop but there is nothing firm to report at this time.
- The City has established a new department called the Department of Neighborhood Development, led by James Rogers, and staff members Ray Ransom and Michelle Johnson. All have have addressed our members at one time or another.

Our Civic League membership night, held Oct. 22nd, at Jessy's was a great success. We have several new members and several returning members. It was a pleasant social event.

Jim Casey attended the City/FEMA meeting on new Flood Zone regulations and with new flood zone maps. Check our website for upcoming meetings of this group. Also check the following websites: www.norfolk.gov/FIRMupdate and www.norfolk.gov/flooding.

The Community Garden Apple and Pumpkin Festival on Oct 25th was also very successful, as was the Holiday 'Spooktacular' held at the Rec. Center on Oct. Oct. 30th. Over 100 children attended and all received a pumpkin and bag of candy. The Civic League was a supporter of this event.

New Business

The Blue Moon Half-Marathon, 5K and Final Mile Event will occur Nov. 21st - 23rd. Check our web site for details.

Ginny Alberts reports that the Bay Oaks Park Committee met with the City to determine which three things will be funded with the \$250,000 the City has set aside for this project. The three items are:

- Close 4th Bay Street. Tear out asphalt, replace with dirt, thus connecting the two sides of the park.
- Place two large signs on the corners of 3rd and 5th Bay Streets. Bids for these signs go out soon.

- Build an entrance plaza where 4th Bay used to meet East Ocean View Ave. Included will be benches, walkway, pergola, and trash cans. Gardens will be planted in this area at a later date.

Ginny publicly thanked Amanda Skupin for her help in getting out volunteers to clean up the Park. They plan to have another work day before December.

The Thanksgiving dinner sponsored by the New Life Christian Church will be held on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27th, at the New Life Church. This event is in its 28th year and will feed 400 people. The meal is free and includes all the fixings. The church also distributes about 40 baskets with a full meal for those that want to fix their meal at home. They welcome help from the membership that day as servers, cleaners, etc. The membership voted to give \$300 toward this event.

The Civic League will also support the Thanksgiving Luncheon that will be held at the Rec. Center on November 22nd and will host 150 participants. The membership voted to give the Rec. Center \$200 toward this event.

Election of Officers: there were no additional nominations from the floor for the 2015 Board of Directors elections to be held in December, so the candidates will be those presently serving in those positions: President (John Greene), Vice-President (Ann Bolen), Secretary (Ann Freeman), and Treasurer (Jeff Lewis) and three Director-at-Large positions: John Hadfield, Rodney Hammonds, and Amanda Skupin. The Officer positions are one-year terms; the Director-at-Large positions are for two years. Elections will be held at the December meeting and one must be a current member to vote.

Our next meeting will be the December 4th and our speaker will be Delegate Chris Stolle who will update us on the General Assembly Session.

Please check our website regularly for information about our area and what is occurring here.

A motion was made and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Ann M. Freeman

Secretary